

PAINÉ. (H. M.)

IS THE

HOMŒOPATHIC SCHOOL UNSECTARIAN?

IS ITS PRACTICE

BASED ON AN "EXCLUSIVE DOGMA"?

✓ BY

H. M. PAINE, A. M., M. D.,

OF ALBANY, N. Y.



REPRINTED, WITH EMENDATIONS AND ADDITIONS, FROM THE
"AMERICAN OBSERVER" OCTOBER, 1878.

ALBANY:

WEED, PARSONS AND COMPANY, PRINTERS.

1879.

CONTENTS.

	PAGE.
ARE HOMŒOPATHISTS SECTARIAN?.....	3
Resolutions adopted by the Homœopathic Medical Society, of the State of New York, February 12, 1878.....	3
Resolutions adopted by the Homœopathic Medical Society of Middle Ten- nessee.....	4
Homœopathists are liberal and unsectarian.....	4
Action of the New York County Homœopathic Medical Society.....	5
Two sorts of members in homœopathic medical societies.....	5
Present position, embarrassing.....	5
The question, one of principle <i>vs.</i> expediency.....	5
Homœopathy an empirical rule of art.....	6
Homœopathy not the only law of cure.....	6
<i>Contraria contrariis</i> also a law of cure.....	6
The progress of homœopathy hindered by its friends.....	6
Homœopathists are not sectarian in practice.....	7, 8
The homœopathic system is not perfect.....	7
Homœopathy is occasionally insufficient.....	7
Homœopathic physicians divided into three classes.....	8
Approximation of the allopathic and homœopathic systems.....	8
Homœopathists are not exclusively homœopathic.....	7, 8, 9
The resolutions demanded by public sentiment.....	9, 10
The New York resolutions favorably criticised.....	9
Homœopathists desire to be recognized as physicians rather than homœopaths.....	9, 10
Extract from the code of ethics of the American Medical Association.....	9
Protest of the Kings County Homœopathic Medical Society.....	9
Homœopathy, a sectarian <i>nickname</i>	10, 11
Resolution adopted by the American Institute of Homœopathy.....	10
Hahnemannians are supporting dead issues.....	10
Hahnemannians, a laughing-stock and stumbling-block.....	11
WHY HOMŒOPATHISTS STILL RETAIN A SECTARIAN NAME.....	11
Homœopathy, the best of extant therapeutic creeds.....	11
The name, "Homœopathist," not to be announced on cards or door-plates.....	11, 12
Present position of the homœopathic school.....	12
Homœopathic medical societies, the homes of freedom.....	12
ALL BARRIERS TO FULL PROFESSIONAL FELLOWSHIP SHOULD BE REMOVED..	13
Medical societies are formed in order that the public may be benefited.....	13
Medical societies should promote the welfare of the people.....	13
All arbitrary rules and creeds should be abrogated.....	13
DECLARATION OF HOMŒOPATHIC PRINCIPLES.....	13
Report of the Committee on liberty of opinion and action.....	13
Criticism of the report of the committee.....	15, 16
EXTRACTS FROM THE CODE OF ETHICS OF THE AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF HOMŒOPATHY.....	16
Extract from the <i>Homœopathic Times</i>	16

ARE HOMŒOPATHISTS UNSECTARIAN?

One of the questions regarding which homœopathists widely differ in opinion, has reference to the applicability of the principle or rule of practice on which the homœopathic system of treatment is founded. One party holds that the principle *similia*, being an immutable law, is mandatory, is universally applicable, and is the *only* one by which cures are ever effected. Another party, while admitting the principle to be one of the more important of Nature's laws, also acknowledges the existence and efficacy of others, which, like that of *contraries*, is, in some instances at least, quite as applicable and trustworthy. They regard the homœopathic principle to be pre-eminently a *rule of art*, varying in the degree of its applicability, as experience shall demonstrate, rather than an absolute and unchangeable law of nature.

One party is faithfully endeavoring to adhere strictly to the exclusive use of homœopathic remedies; the other is as honestly applying them in a majority of cases, and also resorts to the occasional use of anti-pathic measures.

These two parties have frequently expressed their sentiments in the form of resolutions formulated in such a manner as to set forth, more or less forcibly, their views of the principles underlying correct medical practice. As a natural result the resolutions have embodied widely different opinions, and have led to prolonged and bitter discussions.

At first absolute confidence was expressed in the universality of the homœopathic principle; but of late years more liberal views are freely and frequently expressed.

The following resolutions embody the sentiments of the liberal and rational party:

WHEREAS, *There are some physicians, who, by injudicious action have bred dissension in our ranks, in which the utmost liberty of opinion and action should always prevail; and

WHEREAS, We deprecate such action as neither conducive to professional harmony, nor tending to the advancement of medical science; therefore

RESOLVED, That in common with other existing associations which

*Adopted February 12. 1878, by the Homœopathic Medical Society of the State of New York.

have for their object investigations and other labors which may contribute to the promotion of medical science, we hereby declare that although firmly believing the principle "*Similia Similibus Curantur*" to constitute the best general guide in the selection of remedies, and fully intending to carry out this principle to the best of our ability, this belief does not debar us from recognizing and making use of the results of any experience, and we shall exercise and defend the inviolable right of every educated physician to make practical use of any established principle in medical science, or of any therapeutical facts founded on experience, so far as in his individual judgment they may tend to promote the welfare of those under his professional care.

"In view of the evident misunderstanding of the true sphere and therapeutic requirements of the homœopathic law, and the discords arising therefrom, notably in the Societies of New York :

RESOLVED. * 1st — That we affirm and publish our full confidence in the law *similia* as the paramount guide in special therapeutics, where pathogenetic means alone are to be employed.

2d. — That we also proclaim our reliance upon the laws of chemistry, mechanics and hygiene or physiology, as guides in the use of means not pathogenetic, and in the adoption of measures to correct the excess or deficiency of things requisite in health, and to remove the known causes and products of disease.

3d — That we deprecate all efforts on the part of Societies to adopt creeds and platforms, limiting the freedom of educated medical men, believing as we do that the responsibilities of the practitioner are essentially personal, and that the art of healing is yet imperfect and progressive."

These resolutions were intended to fairly represent the present advanced sentiments and practice of a portion of the membership of the homœopathic school. They distinctly set forth, that the homœopathic system alone is insufficient in a portion of cases met with in ordinary practice; and that, in some instances at least, recoveries are more prompt and satisfactory when supplemented by palliatives, adjuvants and even antipathic remedies. While expressing entire confidence in homœopathy, whenever applicable, they substantially declare that homœopathists are not practicing an *exclusive system* of treatment, and ought to be regarded as *liberal* and *unsectarian* physicians.

It is very probable that these resolutions will not at first be received with favor by many homœopathists. The New York resolution was twice adopted and then rescinded by the Homœopathic Medical Society, of New York county. It was offered and tabled at the annual meeting of the Illinois Homœopathic Medical Society. One remonstrance to it has been made by the Kings County Homœopathic Medical Society, and one by the Homœopathic Medical Society of Chester and Delaware counties in Pennsylvania. Nevertheless, these resolutions plainly indicate a growing sentiment in opposition to the assumption of the

*Adopted by the Homœopathic Medical Society of Middle Tennessee.

infallibility and universality of the homœopathic principle. And it is to be hoped that this liberal element will ultimately prevail.

The following extract, from the *Medical Record* of December 21, 1878, page 493, plainly states the question at issue, and forcibly expresses sentiments of disapproval of the course adopted by the exclusives: "At the recent annual meeting of the Homœopathic Medical Society of the county of New York, there was a fresh struggle between the liberals and exclusives. The occasion was a proposed amendment to the constitution of their society. The change sought was the removal of the clause which virtually binds its members to an exclusive homœopathic practice, and declares to the world that such is the practice of its members. It being generally admitted, however, that the great majority do not confine themselves thus strictly, an effort was made by some of the more intelligent, and, we may say, honest members by public declaration, to place the matter in its true light before the profession and the public. This effort was defeated.

"The present position of affairs, therefore, seems to be that the Society in question contains two sorts of members, those who desire emancipation from the thralldom of dogma, and the acknowledged right to practice as their judgments dictate, and second, those who practically do the same, *but are not willing that the public should know it*. The position of these gentlemen is too obvious to require lengthy comment. It is simply an example of the apparent dishonesty and fraud which we have, perhaps, too universally charged against homœopathists in general.

"The position, however, of the so-called liberal homœopaths — those who believe that many drugs can be usefully applied according to homœopathic principles as formulated in the proposition "*Similia*," etc., but who do not regard this principle as always available — in the present aspect of affairs, must be somewhat embarrassing. If they remain members of their County Society, they are viutually *participantes criminis* of false pretenses. If they resign, they, in a measure, lose the political (medical) rights which they now enjoy, and with no assurance that they can acquire new ones. The question, then, seems to become one of principle *vs.* expediency. Which will probably yield the most satisfactory results in the end we leave them to determine."

The following extended quotations are intended to show that the leading members of the homœopathic school in this country and in England occupy this advanced, liberal and rational position.

Dr. Richard Hughes, in his admirable reply to Dr. P. P. Wells, published in the *North American Journal*, November, 1878, page 253, says: "I submit, therefore, that Dr. Wells is not justified in denouncing it as a crime to represent the homœopathic principle as a rule of art rather than as a law of science. In propounding the latter position as one of

obligation, he seems to me going beyond the facts, as he is certainly unwarranted by any authority. This being so, I cannot feel the force of his protest against the attitude which the great majority of our school assume with regard to *similia similibus*, and which seems to me well expressed by the New York Homœopathic Society.*

"If in homœopathy, as propounded by Hahnemann, we recognized a law of nature, such as Newton propounded under the name of gravitation, we should have nothing to do but to obey it and utilize it as best we could. But accepting it as he gave it us—as an *empirical rule of art*, deduced from observation, it is for us to work it wherever applicable, and to *suffer it to find its own place among other rules similarly obtained*. 'Let contraries be treated by contraries,' is one of these, not less potentially accredited and *more obviously reasonable*. We have observed and experimented with the two, and have concluded—as Hahnemann did—that the method of contraries is that of temporary palliation, that of similars of permanent cure.

"But it is quite conceivable—and, as, I think, demonstrable—that there are some morbid states which are so temporary, and at the same time so distressing, that antipathic palliation is all they require, and that by giving the patient the benefit of this, you do best to help him in his need. If this be so, and it is purely a question of experience—we are bound to avail ourselves of *contraria contrariis*. We, therefore, decline to bind ourselves beforehand by any obligation to follow a certain method to the exclusion of all others. The method in question must find its predominance in our practice by its own inherent merits, not by the adventitious weight of prescription and authority. I can conceive of no other position than this, which it is legitimate for a physician to take up."

Dr. J. P. Dake, in defense of resolutions adopted by the Homœopathic Medical Society of Tennessee,† of similar import to that previously adopted by the New York State Homœopathic Medical Society, tersely concludes an article in the January number of the *American Observer*, page 43, as follows:

"Claiming all that is due to the law *similia*, we are ready to accord to other laws and practical guides what truly and clearly belongs to them. 'If this be treason, make the most of it.'

"Groundless assumptions as to the scope and applicability of that law (*similia*), claiming for its dominion all the wide fields of human ailments, all the subtle affinities of earth, and the measureless mysteries of the heavens, *have done more to hinder the progress of homœopathy and to disgrace its advocates, than the most determined assaults, made upon it, by all its enemies.*"

Dr. Dake further states in the *Homœopathic Times*, December, 1878,

* Resolutions, pages 3 and 4.

† Page 4.

page 199, "For more than thirty years I have been a *homœopathist*, so far as homœopathy has to do with human ailments; but I have considered myself, at the same time, as something more than a homœopathist.

"I have been a *mechanic* in adjusting broken bones and in removing foreign and morbid bodies when injuring my patients; a *chemist* in using antidotes for poisons, and in all approved measures for disinfection; a *hygienist* in prescribing change of air, of business, or of habits, for those requiring such change alone for the recovery of health; a *parasiticide* in the employment of means to destroy the parasites, which, let alone, injure health and destroy life; and an *allopath* in the exhibition of palliatives, in cases where destruction of tissue or exhaustion of recuperative power renders a cure out of the question, and where great suffering exists, or a speedy death may occur, without them.

"But I am reminded that I have been no more than any other good homœopath; that all homœopaths resort to the outside means which I have referred to, as occasion requires, and that there is no need of special comments on the subject.

"Why, then, allow me to ask, do we read and hear so much about the *all-sufficiency* of the law *similia*, and the utter folly and madness of considering *any other principle* in the wide domain of therapeutics?

"Are we to employ means of cure in our daily practice, outside of the sphere of the homœopathic law, without regard to the laws which govern there?

"Are such things to be seized upon, and used, and tossed away, as simple 'adjuvants' when successfully employed in cases where they alone are called for, and where homœopathic remedies are utterly useless?"

Homœopathic Medical Societies bear a sectarian name, and, on that account are liable to be considered sectarian societies, and by inference, their members sectarians in medicine. Now it is a notable fact, one recognized by both the profession and the public, that a majority of homœopathists are not sectarian in practice. They are not sectarian because they have found by experience that the homœopathic system is *not perfect, and is occasionally insufficient*.

Dr. Dudgeon, in the article previously quoted, says: "If the chemist and the optical scientist would indignantly reject a name derived from their theoretical views, why should we eagerly assume one derived from the latest and most advanced rule for therapeutic treatment, which may, perhaps — *for it is not perfect and infallible*, as we all know — be superseded by something better?"

Dr. Dunham, in his admirable address before the American Institute of Homœopathy, delivered in June, 1870, on "*Freedom of Medical*

Opinion and Action ; a Vital Necessity and a Great Responsibility," divides homœopathists into three classes :

First. "The strict followers of Hahnemann ;"

Second. Those "who take the name of homœopathic physicians, but do not accept the homœopathic law as of universal application in therapeutics, or who do not accept the peculiar mode of practice generally-known as homœopathic ; the single remedy, for instance, and the minimum dose ;"

Third. And those "who mix remedies in their prescriptions, who alternate and rotate remedies, and whose massive doses would sometimes astonish the Old School itself."

The two classes last referred to are members of our societies and are representatives of the homœopathic system of practice, and they will remain in our fellowship. We cannot expel them ; we cannot convert them into the first class named. Moreover, the practice of these last two classes, which constitute the major part of the membership of the homœopathic school, has approached so closely to that of the Old School ; or, the practice of the latter having of late years been greatly changed is now so nearly like that of our own, as to have created an impression, on the part of the public, that practically the two systems are *essentially identical* ; that is, both employ remedies to relieve and cure the sick without producing medicinal disturbing influences, and both use palliatives and adjuvants in common.

Regarding this point, Dr. Dudgeon in an article entitled "*Physician or Homœopath ?*" published in the *American Observer*, August, 1878, page 405, says : "Circumstances are completely altered since the time when homœopathy was first introduced into this country. Then the prevalent practice was so entirely different from what it is now, and consequently from the homœopathic, that there was no apparent point of contact between the two * * * But in these later years we have witnessed a gradual *approximation of the practice of the dominant majority to the homœopathic*. The points of contact between them are many ; the methods of the new school *have been adopted to a very considerable extent by the old.*"

The impression, therefore, prevails on the part of the public, that *we* are not consistent ; that in practice *we* are not strictly homœopathic, as *in truth, we are not.*

Dr. Dudgeon in the article previously quoted, says : "Still there is some force in the objection that by the assumption of the name of homœopath, we imply that we will treat patients only by homœopathy, whereas we actually do treat them to the best of our judgment, *and in many cases, as I have shown, by remedies that are not homœopathic at all.*"

To pretend to be exclusive homœopathists, and at the same time engage in mixed practice, is not creditable to our school. We are

homœopathists but not exclusively. Hence the propriety and the exceeding fitness of adopting the resolution in question.

Taking this view of the sentiments embodied in these resolutions their adoption appears to be demanded by the public. They comport with our practice, and indicate a degree of fairness on our part which is highly commendable, and is recognized and very favorably criticised by the public. Many of the daily papers in New York, and several allopathic medical journals commented on the passage of the New York resolutions, in terms of decided approval.

The *Medical Record*, Vol. 13, p. 212, says: "It would appear that the large majority of the members of that *sect* in this city, and throughout the State, desire to be considered *physicians rather than homœopaths*, and to avail themselves of all, rather than a portion only, of the resources of medical science. *That this is the only proper ground upon which men claiming to be scientific should stand is self-evident.*"

The resolutions recognize and express the right of private judgment on the part of the members of the Society. Abstractly, neither a minority nor majority in any scientific association has a right to make arbitrary rules which interfere with freedom of opinion and action. The code of ethics of the American Medical Association* assumes to control this prerogative, and it sadly interferes with public interests, and is condemned by public sentiment.

Those who oppose the resolutions claim that there is no necessity for their adoption; that we are now, while claiming the name homœopathists, at liberty to apply any and all methods of treatment extant. And, in fact, a circular has been issued by a committee of the Kings County Homœopathic Medical Society protesting against the resolution, "as uncalled for by any facts or interests pertaining to any branch of medical science, and as calculated to degrade the law of healing practically, whenever, and wherever they have influence." †

We reply that, while the membership of our societies is made up of the three classes of homœopathists previously described, and while we

*Article IV, section 1. A regular medical education furnishes the only presumptive evidence of professional abilities and acquirements, and ought to be the only acknowledged right of an individual to the exercise and honors of his profession. Nevertheless, as in consultations the good of the patient is the sole object in view, and this is often dependent on personal confidence, no intelligent *regular* practitioner who has a license to practice from some medical board of known and acknowledged respectability, *recognized by this association*, and who is in good moral and professional standing in the place in which he resides, should be fastidiously excluded from fellowship, or his aid refused in consultation, when it is requested by the patient. But no one can be considered as a regular practitioner or a fit associate in consultation, *whose practice is based on an exclusive dogma*, to the rejection of the accumulated experience of the profession, and of the aids actually furnished by anatomy, physiology, pathology, and organic chemistry.

† *American Observer*, October, 1878, page 480.

are members of a society bearing a sectarian "nickname," the very condition exists which calls for an expression of the sentiments embodied in the resolution. We grant that, if all the members were of the first class named, *i. e.* strict Hahnemannians, the declarations set forth in the resolutions would be unnecessary and harmful; but, under existing circumstances, they are exceedingly appropriate and timely.

So much has been said and written of late regarding exclusivism and sectarianism in medicine, that a declaration of some sort from homœopathic societies seems desirable, in order to correct an erroneous impression which appears to prevail, that there is a want of conformity between our profession and our practice.

When the New York resolution was under consideration the second time by the New York county society, only three or four out of about forty physicians present declared themselves *exclusive* homœopathists. Therefore, while it may not be expedient at present to drop the distinctive name of our State and local societies, it is eminently proper and is required by the exigencies of the time that at least a qualifying and explanatory statement like the resolutions in question, unequivocally defining our position, should be made public and permanently placed on the records of the Society.

It is quite probable that an expression of sentiment in the form of a resolution will be scarcely considered sufficient; something more than this is necessary, *viz.*, the incorporation into the by-laws of a declaration to the effect that, although members of a society bearing a sectarian name, we desire to be recognized as physicians in a truly catholic sense, and to discard all association with sectarianism and exclusivism in medicine.

It is evident that the true position of our State associations should be as liberal and noble as that taken by the American Institute of Homœopathy, as set forth in its resolution adopted June, 1871, as follows:

"*Resolved*, That the interests of the cause of truth and the interests of humanity rise higher than the distinctive lines of medical schools, and we hold it to be the duty of medical men to disregard such distinctive lines where these higher interests can be subserved thereby."

This resolution was intended to rebuke sectarianism in the so-called regular school; its application at the present time seems very appropriate on account of the exclusivism of strict Hahnemannians, those malcontents in our school who are still diligently nursing the *theory of the universality of the rule similia, the theory of the minimum dose, and the theory of dynamization*, dead issues, which have been long since discarded by a majority of homœopathists.

Dr. Dake in the article published in the *Homœopathic Times*, previously quoted, concludes as follows: "I must express the hope that those in our ranks who are so ready to censure and denounce their

brethren (referring to the Kings county circular,) for not appreciating the homœopathic law, and for recognizing other laws in the wide domain of therapeutics, may study more successfully the methods of scientific discovery, and the origin and scope of what are known as natural laws and principles, to the end that they may be wiser and more useful, and *less a laughing-stock to the world and a stumbling-block in the way of intelligent medical men.*"

WHY HOMŒOPATHISTS STILL RETAIN A SECTARIAN NAME.

The following quotations from the recent writings of two prominent English homœopathic physicians very satisfactorily state the reasons why homœopathists still remain in fellowship with societies bearing a sectarian name.

Dr. Dudgeon, in the article previously referred to, says: "There remains, then, this question: Shall we call ourselves 'homœopaths,' 'homœopathists,' or 'homœopathic physicians?' We are called so by our differently thinking colleagues, and by many of our patients, but the application in these cases *is used as a nickname*, or to avoid circumlocution, just as we speak of our misbelieving colleagues as 'allopaths,' a title they would most certainly refuse to adopt, *and very properly so*. Why then should we, because by means of Hahnemann's discovery we have rendered rational the hitherto irrational therapeutic part of medicine, assume an appellation indicative of the therapeutic principles whereby this has been effected? Would a chemist who had adopted the atomic theory of Dalton call himself an 'atomist?' or an optical physicist who believes in the undulatory theory of light, call himself an 'undulatist. If not, then neither should a physician, because he has adopted the latest and best — theory shall we say? — no, it is hardly that — rule, for the employment of drugs in disease, call himself by the name of **this therapeutic rule.** * * * * Medical theories and therapeutic rules are changeable and transitory, but the physicians who adopt or renounce them remain physicians through all the changes of their theories or systems.

"It seems ludicrous, because we hold what we know to be the best of extant therapeutic creeds, to assert that we have reached finality in therapeutic science, and to barter our glorious name of physician, which we have borne through all the vicissitudes of medical beliefs, for a *mere nickname*, derived from the latest outcome of medical practice.

"If it is right to call ourselves homœopaths, it cannot be wrong to announce the fact on our door-plates and calling-cards, and yet no one who respects himself would resort to such a practice, and even the

British Homœopathic Society would expel any member who did so, thereby showing that they consider it a sin against medical ethics * *

"Therefore it would be well to avoid the assumption of an appellation that is felt to be an offense to the professional feeling of many estimable colleagues, *more especially as we cannot altogether justify it from the facts of our actual practice.*"

Dr. Hughes, in his admirable open letter, to which previous reference has been made, clearly defines the present position of the homœopathic school as follows :

"But Dr. Wells seems to say, why call yourselves homœopathists at all? Why not take the name which truly denotes your position — that of eclectics? My answer is, that we do not call ourselves homœopathists. The term is used, for convenience's sake, to designate those who accept the method of Hahnemann as valid, in contradistinction to those who reject and ignore it. But we do not put it on the door-plates or professional cards; we do not allow ourselves to be so described in general directories. When we sanction the use of the names in the 'British Homœopathic Directory,' it is as of those who are chiefly guided in the treatment of the sick by the law of similars. 'We are' (I quote from the preface to the edition of 1870,) 'physicians and surgeons, not mere homœopathists and Hahnemannians. The name of sect or sectary is as unpleasant to us as to any of our medical brethren. But a legacy of medical and historical truth has devolved upon us, which it is our duty and should be one of our highest privileges to receive and preserve, until the work of the greatest therapeutic discoverer is acknowledged as a fact, not denounced as a fallacy, and the *law* which he evoked, accepted as the chief, if not the only means of therapeutic progress.

"Besides this (which is merely incidental) the only way in which we stamp ourselves as in any way distinct from the profession at large, is our membership of homœopathic societies, our service in homœopathic institutions, our contributions to homœopathic journals. Do we in any way bind ourselves thereby to an exclusive adoption of the method so designated? Surely not. The rules of no society or institution of the kind require any such engagement from their members or officers. They are the homes of freedom, not of restriction; and we resort to them because we find there that liberty which is denied us in the corresponding organizations of the old school. We believe in homœopathy; we rank ourselves among its adherents; and we claim our right to profess and practice it. If this right is denied us in our natural fellowship, we must seek or form others; but we do not thereby create for ourselves a new bondage, and abdicate our right to make as much or as little use of our newly acquired method as we judge best."

ALL BARRIERS TO FULL PROFESSIONAL FELLOWSHIP SHOULD BE REMOVED.

Medical associations are formed ostensibly for the purpose of the better qualifying medical men to treat diseases successfully. They promote the acquirement of practical knowledge, by affording opportunity for a comparison of views and experiences, which shall prove of benefit not to themselves alone, but *through them to the public*. Public interests require their organization and maintainance. These are the ulterior purposes for which medical societies are formed, therefore, their management should be such as to promote and protect the welfare of the people.

Medical societies are proportionately useful as the full benefit of their practical advantages are extended to qualified physicians; hence special care should be taken not to limit or interfere with their benevolent offices by the enactment of arbitrary rules or creeds,* designed to restrict their membership and professional intercourse to a portion of the educated practitioners in any community.

While the enforcement of exclusive bans may not prove detrimental to physicians as a class, may even prove of benefit to a portion of them, the people, non-professional members of the community, are the sufferers; hence, all unreasonable and unnecessary obstacles to free fraternal fellowship among medical men, *which may interfere with public interests*, should be speedily removed, to the end, that the greatest possible benefit may be secured by all who require the services of the medical profession.

DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES.

At the annual meeting of the Homœopathic Medical Society of the State of New York, held February 12, 1879, a motion was made to reconsider and expunge Dr. Fowler's resolution adopted at the previous annual meeting.† An amendment was adopted referring the subject to a committee of five, who subsequently presented the following *declaration of principles*, which report was adopted, at the suggestion of the committee, for consideration one year.

"Your committee, representing the extremes of our school both in practice and views, have unanimously agreed to present the following paper. They ask for its careful and liberal consideration. They hope it may be received by the society, ordered to be printed and sent to every homœopathic physician of the State.

"They suggest that the committee or their successors be continued during the year. That the chairman be the medium of correspondence

* Vide, extract from the code of ethics of the American Medical Association page 8. Per contra, extract from the code of ethics of the American Institute of Homœopathy, page 16.

† Pages 3 and 4.

with any member of the profession who may desire so to do. And that their final report be made to the society at the afternoon session of the first day of the session of 1880.

"WHEREAS, the resolutions* passed by this society at its last annual meeting, do not justly express the views of our school, and are calculated to place us in a false position before the world.

"Therefore, we the members of said society, deem it expedient to put upon record the following avowal of our position :

"1st. That we adhere to the formula of "*similia similibus curantur*" as enunciating the great therapeutic law, for the treatment of disease. Evolved by induction, formulated by the venerated Hahnemann, tested and approved by thousands of physicians, during scores of years, we are assured that with our increased knowledge of the *Materia Medica*, we shall be able to demonstrate more fully its universality as a therapeutic law, and show in a more perfect manner its harmony with other and cognate natural laws.

"2d. That we clearly and emphatically distinguish between a 'therapeutic law' and the laws of chemistry, physics, and hygiene, and as in the treatment of disease their formula '*sublata causa, tollitur effectus*' is often to be remembered and used with advantage, yet such laws and such action in no way infringe upon or invalidate the *therapeutic law* '*similia similibus curantur*.'

"3d. That we have not in the past, nor do we now, yield one tittle of our rights as physicians, to use any means or appliances of the general profession to aid in the treatment of our patients (under the homœopathic law), or in the palliation of their suffering through the application of physical, surgical, chemical or hygienic laws, leaving the question of such use to the individual judgment of the practitioner, assured that they will be the least used by those who are the best acquainted with our *Materia Medica*, and best able to wield its immense *armamentarium*.

"4th. That contrary to the opinion held by some, we most thoroughly indorse, and would most earnestly enforce the study of pathology and pathological anatomy in our schools, and by our students as determining in the direction of a broader medical culture.

"5th. That the great work of our school, is the advancing of medical sciences, the provings of drugs, and the enlarging, purifying and verifying of our *Materia Medica*,

"We point with just pride to the work we have already accomplished, and though we may lament that it has not been more thorough, and lies open to criticism, yet we hail the continued appropriation by other schools of the medicines and methods of using them, introduced by us to the profession in those diseases where their usefulness has been

* Pages 3 and 4.

indicated by their pathogenesis, as a virtual indorsement of our labor and to a certain extent vouching for their substantial accuracy.

"We do not look upon this action on the part of our *quondam* opponents with jealousy, but welcome it cordially, *when credited*, as the dawning of a better era. We freely yield our labors for the use of others, as only a just contribution to the general profession from which we have received so much.

"6th. In relation to the dose of the *similimum* proper to be exhibited, we discover that the most brilliant triumphs of homœopathy have been achieved by the use of attenuated medicines; yet as a matter of fact we find that even the crude drug in minute doses, will exhibit power to become a remedy under our therapeutic law.

"But, as we as yet have not been able to deduce a law, to guide us in determining the *amount* of a drug to be used, or the *attenuation* to be exhibited, in order to meet the demands of any case most accurately, this society, while declining on the one hand to join with those who decry attenuated medicines, on the other, will not refuse to recognize as brethren those, who, governed by their honest convictions can only exhibit crude medicines or the lowest attenuations in the treatment of the sick.

"7. In conclusion, we would most frankly and fully join in the motto of one whom this society loved to honor, when in life he so often and so rarely directed its councils: '*In certis unitas, in dubiis libertas, in omnibus charitas.*'"

Dr. Fowler's resolution was open to unfavorable criticism by the opponents of homœopathy, because it was not qualified by explanatory statements. The report of the committee, in its first five sections, is equally liberal and far less objectionable in form, and will, without doubt, receive the indorsement of a large majority of homœopathists.

The committee, by inserting the sixth section, have introduced philosophical questions regarding which an honest and apparently unreconcilable difference of opinion exists, on account of the *ex parte* and untrustworthy evidence hitherto furnished regarding the utility and homœopathic application of *highly* attenuated medicines. The question of the proper dose is one which was not embraced in Dr. Fowler's resolution, and its discussion need not have been entered upon by the committee. The presence of the sixth section need not, and probably will not, be considered an indorsement of the absurd and unscientific theories and practice promulgated by Dr. Hahnemann, which have been long since discarded by liberal and rational homœopathists.

EXTRACTS FROM THE CODE OF ETHICS OF THE AMERICAN INSTITUTE
OF HOMŒOPATHY.*

"† A complete medical education, of which the diploma of a medical college is the formal voucher, furnishes the only presumptive evidence of professional acquirements and abilities. But the annals of the profession contains the names of some who, not having the advantage of a complete medical education, became, nevertheless, through their own exertions and abilities, brilliant scholars and successful practitioners. A practitioner, therefore, whatever his credentials may be, who enjoys a good moral and professional standing in the community, should not be excluded from fellowship, nor his aid rejected, when it is desired by the patient in consultation. No difference in views on subjects of medical principles or practice should be allowed to influence a physician against consenting to a consultation with a fellow practitioner. The very object of a consultation is to bring together those who may, perhaps, differ in their views of the disease and its appropriate treatment, in the hope that, from a comparison of different views, may be derived a just estimate of the disease and a successful course of treatment.

"No tests of orthodoxy in medical practice should be applied to limit the freedom of consultations. Medicine is a progressive science. Its history shows that what is heresy in one century may, and probably will be orthodoxy in the next. No greater misfortune can befall the medical profession than the action of an influential association or academy establishing a creed or standard of orthodoxy or 'regularity.' It will be fatal to freedom and progress in opinion and practice. On the other hand, nothing will so stimulate the healthy growth of the profession, both in scientific strength and in the honorable estimation of the public, as the universal and sincere adoption of a platform which shall recognize and guarantee:

"1st. A truly fraternal good-will and fellowship among all who devote themselves to the care of the sick.

"2d. A thorough and complete knowledge, however obtained, of all the direct and collateral branches of medical science—as it exists in all sects and schools of medicine—as the essential qualification of a physician.

"3d. Perfect freedom of opinion and practice, as the unquestionable prerogative of the practitioner, who is the sole judge of what is the best mode of treatment in each case of sickness intrusted to his care."

Regarding the foregoing extracts, the *Homœopathic Times* of March, 1879, states editorially:

"The above is all the 'creed' that should be required by any true and unprejudiced physician. Science knows no prejudice and recognizes no hobbies, and the less we have of exacting dogmatism, the better it will be for all concerned.

"We would also suggest to those who have the subject of revising the expressions used by the State Society in its resolution of last year, that perhaps the re-iteration of the above sentiments—already its own by adoption—might meet the wishes of the majority better than the proposed resolution of this year, reported by them, and printed with the minutes of the society for future consideration. Here we have the sentiments of the former resolution—which has been so strongly objected to by some—in more concise, elegant and understandable language, and it is already a part of OUR BY-LAWS."

* Adopted by the State Homœopathic Medical Society. † Article IV, section 1.